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ABSTRACT

This book examines research on young children's experiences with and understanding of gender, race, and power, highlighting interactions within first and second grade classrooms. The introduction explains gender, race, and power issues. Chapter 1, "Teacher Research: Texts and Subtexts," describes the research project. Chapter 2, "The Gender Circus," presents snapshots of gender dynamics that classroom teachers confront. Chapter 3, "Bad Boys and Their Stories," explains how teachers must narrow their focus to understand how some boys gain and maintain power. Chapter 4, "Silence as a Fortress and a Prison," describes work with a silent girl who disrupted her teacher's vision of power in teaching and learning. Chapter 5, "Posing," discusses posing as a way children influence others. Chapter 6, "The Saturday Game," describes a game orchestrated by the bad boys to shape classroom discourse for entertainment. Chapter 7, "Your Mother Squeezes Your Brains Out Your Ears," illustrates boys and girls trying to make authentic contact as friends. Chapter 8, "Sing a Song to Your Friends to Make Them Feel Better," and Chapter 9, "What Does That Mean, the 'N' Word?," consider miscommunication as a source of tension among children, describing how power and gender intertwine with race, culture, status, and belonging. Chapter 10, "Girls in Public," examines different paths girls travel to take control of their identities within the social milieu. Chapter 11, "Dreamin' of How it Could Be," discusses children's actions related to their imagined purposes and aspirations to cross boundaries and have new experiences. (Contains an Afterword, 38 references and an index.) (SM)

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